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country, or of its shores, and of those that visit it at intervals: and it is quite wonderful what might be effected in this way, by a little exertion, in a very short space of time. Many extraordinary circumstances in Natural History often occur, but for want of any mode of recording them, or preserving them in a collected form, they are now altogether lost.

The expense of preserving subjects of Natural History not being great, and it being calculated that the subjects themselves would, for the most part, be presented to the Society, it would not be, perhaps, too sanguine to hope that funds might be easily collected at once, to procure suitable premises for the Museum. All specimens presented to the Society to be labelled with the name of the donor. As funds would permit, a library of Books connected with the Science might be added to it—accessible to all subscribers—in the Museum: and here again, it is not too much to suppose, that numerous gifts from the lovers of the science, and patriotic individuals, might be calculated upon.

In the course of a short time, Lectures on Natural History might be instituted, under such regulations as might be deemed expedient; this would tend greatly to the diffusion of knowledge, on one of the most instructive, as well as most agreeable, of all the sciences.

Making the admittance to the Museum, at suitable times, open to all the members of the family of a subscriber, would be a very satisfactory return for the expense of his annual or life subscription; and it would hardly be too much to suppose that every parent of a family would be glad to enrol his name in a Society calculated to form so delightful a source of amusement to his children.

Out of the members should be chosen, by a ballot at a general meeting, a President, a Committee of twelve or twenty, to conduct the business of the Society, two Treasurers, and a Secretary, all of whom should give their services gratuitously—the only paid officers of the Society being the keeper of the Museum, and a porter.

The above is a mere outline of a plan which must afterwards be subjected to the approval of a general meeting of Subscribers, if it is found that a sufficient number can be obtained to establish the Society.

Should you be disposed to assist in furthering the formation of what appears to me so very desirable an institution, perhaps you would allow a book, for the reception of names, to be left at the Office of the LITERARY GAZETTE, for that purpose.

I am, Sir,
Your very obedient servant,

W.

We are happy to accede to the concluding request of our valued correspondent, and should feel much gratified by the successful formation of such a Society.—ED.

THE DRAMA.

On Monday evening, Mr. Macready, after a long absence, re-appeared on our boards in his favourite character of Virginius—his merits in this part have been already so amply discussed, and generally admitted, that we fear incurring a charge of hypercriticism, when we do more than record our concurrence in the eulogium which public approbation has long and deservedly conferred upon him; we must however

state, that on Monday night, he not only fully sustained the impression we had already conceived of his excellencies, but appeared to surpass his former efforts.—It has been almost universally allowed, that no actor of the present day can portray the tender sensibilities of parental affection like Mr. Macready: to the possession of a highly cultivated judgment and refined discrimination, he superadds classic purity of style and declamatory powers of the first order; we know there are some who, in this latter respect, think Mr. Young his superior, possessing as that gentleman does, in his style of delivery all the characteristics of the Kembles school, of which we acknowledge ourselves disciples; but every one who has heard Mr. Macready in the soliloquies of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, must acknowledge him perfect master of all the graces of elocution. To return however, to Virginius, Mr. Macready's scene in the first act, where the betrothment of Virginia to Icilius takes place, exhibited a sublime picture of paternal feeling, warmed into tenderness by the idea of resigning to another, the being who had been so long the object of his fondest solicitude, and in the transition which immediately follows, where the *amor patriæ* of the Roman soars above the consideration of domestic ties the moment he hears the enemy is in the field, Mr. Macready realised our most elevated notions of devoted heroism. His scene also in the *forum* before *Appius*, was a masterpiece of histrionic ability, and afterwards, where he strangles the tyrant, his furious look and wild demeanour had a most appalling effect.

Though Miss Smithson's Virginia did not quite come up to our ideas of nature, so as to entitle her to unqualified praise, we are, at the same time, happy to observe that in her performance on this occasion, she displayed great truth in conception, and a propriety of judgment, which rendered her well deserving of the applause which was bestowed upon her.

Mr. Cooke's Icilius possessed considerable merit, and confirmed the favourable opinion we have already expressed with regard to this gentleman.

On this evening, Mr. T. P. Cooke also appeared in a nautical piece, called "Black-eyed Susan," in which, of course, he performs the leading character. Mr. Cooke has long been identified with such parts, which he represents with a fidelity, that leaves him without a competitor. The present production, though possessing little merit for originality, derives some interest from his excellent acting, particularly in the last act, where, on hearing sentence of death pronounced, he called forth the sympathies of his audience, by his display of noble resignation, combined with the struggles of ardent affection for his faithful Susan. The piece abounds in sea phrases, and has but one song, (that from which it takes its name,) which was pleasingly executed by Mr. Bedford. Much credit is due to Mr. Bunn, for the exertions he has made on the present occasion, in collecting so much talent as the Theatre now presents, and we trust it will have the effect of reviving that Dramatic taste in this Metropolis, which, if we are to judge by the paucity of visitors to the Theatre since its opening, appears to be rapidly declining.

On Saturday evening, Mr. Dowton having concluded his engagement, took his benefit at our Theatre; we were glad to see the house well attended, not only for the sake of the in-

dividual, but from an anxiety that such talent as Mr. Dowton possesses, should never be permitted to depart from our shores without experiencing that encouragement and reward which those, who have the interests of the Drama truly at heart, will never fail to afford.

MUSIC.

We were among the visitors at the meeting of the Philharmonic Society on Wednesday evening, and enjoyed a rich musical treat—the pieces selected for the occasion, consisted chiefly of foreign compositions, the works of Beethoven, Weber, &c. all of which were most effectively performed, particularly a beautiful symphony of the former composer, which we learn had never before been heard in this country—and Weber's Overture to his Opera of "*The Ruling Spirits*." In the course of the evening, several Songs and Glees were sang, Sir John Stevenson presiding at the Piano Forte. The whole concluded with Beethoven's Overture to Prometheus, which was executed in a manner highly creditable to the performers.

We are happy to see this Society rapidly progressing, under the leadership of Mr. James Barton, and we hail its existence as affording a means for the development of amateur talent, and the further diffusion of musical knowledge in this country.

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

The second general meeting of this academy, for the year 1830, was held on Monday evening last, the lord bishop of Cloyne, the president, in the chair. To this admirable prelate the society is deeply indebted for the zeal and attention which he has always paid, not only to the advancement of science in general, but in a particular manner to the interests of this academy. On Monday evening his lordship laid before the meeting a curious and accurate pencil-drawing of an Aloe, which lately flowered in Lord Carbery's gardens at Castle Freke, together with some interesting particulars respecting its size, manner of growth, &c. in this and other countries. The popular notion is, that it flowers once in a century only; this opinion is, however, incorrect: in the present instance the plant was about fifty years old, when, on the 4th of June last, the flowering shoot burst forth with a noise, and on the 20th of October following, it had attained its full height of 24 feet, the total height from the ground being 30 feet. The girth of the plant at the ground was 9 feet; that of the flower stem at the point of its springing from the plant, 2 feet 2 inches. The length of the lateral flower stalk on which the umbel is borne, was 2 feet 6 inches, and the number of flowers in the largest umbels 250. The length of the longest leaves was 6 feet 6 inches, and their solid thickness about 6 inches.

The plant was kept under cover in its earliest years in a flower pot, afterwards in a large wooden tub; then in the ground, in a conservatory, till about sixteen years ago, when it was removed into the open ground in a sheltered situation, with a good southern aspect, and occasionally protected in the winter by placing a hot-bed frame on posts over it. But even in very hard frosts it had no lateral shoots. As soon as it was perceived to be about to flower, a protection was made for it by a frame.